

you to prepare a memorandum on the railroads in Argentina for his bank. There is no hurry, take your time. . . . The honorarium will be paid in advance. . . . Say ten thousand francs. . . . You are not expected to live on your printed articles, but on those which nobody reads. . . .”

“A little blackmail?” I asked.

His face got red. “Not in the least, Monsieur. You did not threaten him and should never threaten anybody. Why would you? Perhaps there is nothing wrong with Algerian investments! The director simply wants to make friends with the press. If you are very particular, you may even prepare the memorandum!”

I decided to forget about a journalistic career in Paris.

Unexpectedly, I received a telegram from the International Labor Office in Geneva, inviting me to attend a two-day conference on causes of unemployment. I went with a carefully prepared ten-page statement. The conference was poorly organized. The staff of the ILO had not assembled material that could serve as the basis for the discussion. The foreign experts came empty-handed. Mine was the only paper submitted at the opening session, and the chairman suggested starting the discussion with it. My paper was essentially methodological. In it I tried to dispel the myth of hard-core technological unemployment and had outlined statistical criteria for determining the source of unemployment in any industry or geographic area at a given time. My proposals would not have sounded very original in the United States in the late 1940's, but they made an impression in Geneva in 1934.

After the conference, the vice-director of the ILO, F. Maurette, asked me to develop my ideas in book form. I wrote the book in three or four months and sent the manuscript to Maurette with an outline of another study on the social consequences of the economic depression in various countries. Maurette was delighted with both my manuscript and the new project, and suggested that the facilities of the ILO would be available to me in my work on the second book.

We gave up our Paris apartment and went to Geneva with the understanding that we would either settle there or go to the United States.

At that time the ILO was celebrating a happy event: the representative of the U.S.S.R. had appeared on the scene! When he learned that my report was in production, he demanded the galleys and, following the usual procedure, was given the paragraphs dealing with his country. Two days later Maurette told me that the Russian representative had objected to the description of the U.S.S.R. as a primarily agricultural country since the Soviet Union was a highly